

## Same sex marriage could come down to one justice

WASHINGTON (BP) — The wait for what could be a legal transformation of the institution of marriage by the U.S. Supreme Court began when oral arguments ended April 28 in a case concerning same sex marriage.

Oral arguments seemed to indicate the case will end with a closely decided opinion on whether the high court or the states may decide if same sex marriage should be legalized. In the nearly two and



KENNEDY

a half hours of arguments, the justices jostled with five lawyers about such issues as changing the ancient meaning of marriage, bestowing dignity on same sex couples, and protecting religious liberty.

"I think it's going to be a 5-4 vote, with [Associate Justice Anthony] Kennedy deciding whether to impose same sex marriage on the whole nation or not," Jordan Lorence, senior counsel for Alliance Defending

Freedom in Scottsdale, Az., told Baptist Press. "I am urging people to pray. I think we could see the Supreme Court go the wrong way on a 5-4 vote, but it's not over 'til it's over."

The justices, who are expected to issue a ruling in late June or early July, have at least three options. They could:

- Legalize same sex marriage throughout the country.

- Enable states to maintain their authority to define marriage as only a heterosexual union.

- Require states to recognize same sex marriages from

other states without prohibiting them from licensing only male-female marriages.

Potentially, the justices also could rule in such a way as to deliver a wider victory for the rights of homosexuals and lesbians.

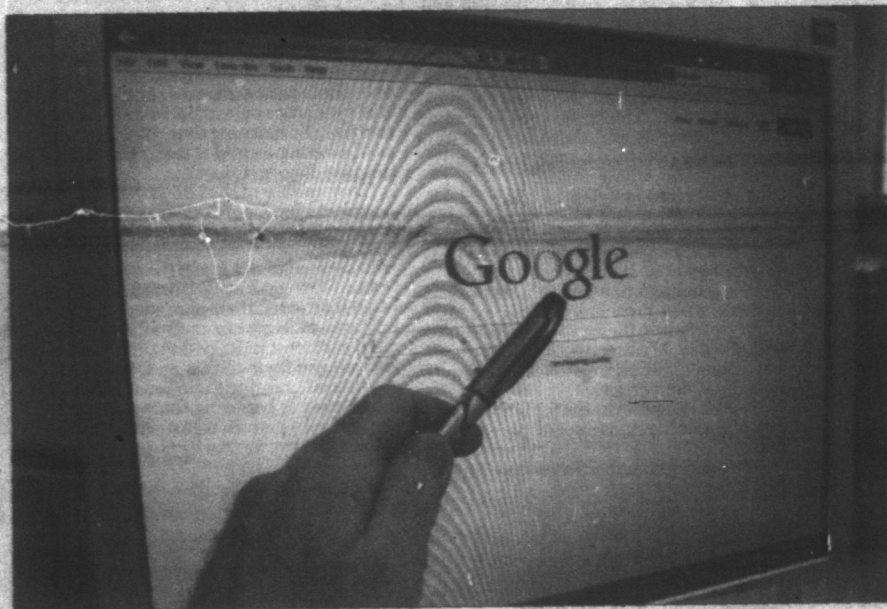
Advocates for biblical, traditional marriage called for continued prayer for the high court and for preparation for an unfavorable decision.

"There were some good questions asked at the court [April 28], ones that I hope the justices will take into account, such as why the court should attempt

to change an institution that has been understood a certain way for millennia," said Russell Moore, president of Southern Baptists' Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission in Nashville.

"As we continue to pray for this case prior to the decision, let's remember, regardless of whether our land's highest court recognizes the unchangeable or not, the church must hold steadfast and learn to engage a culture with the Gospel in which we

see MARRIAGE on p. 9



## Google search results change could affect church web sites

NASHVILLE (BP) — A change in Google's formula for prioritizing search results could keep churches without mobile-friendly web sites from being as visible online to potential visitors.

Starting April 21, Google updated its algorithms for searches done from mobile devices to give higher placement in the results to web sites that are compatible with such devices. That means churches with older, more basic web sites may not appear among the top results when, for example, mobile

phone users search for "Baptist church" and their city.

"Why is this a concern?" asked Michael Magruder, director of LifeWay.com, for LifeWay Christian Resources. "Google estimates that over 60% of search queries currently originate from mobile devices. The biggest question businesses and organizations ask is, 'How do I know if my web site is mobile optimized?'"

Tony Boes, the Missouri Baptist Convention's web master, told Baptist Press there are simple ways a church can

determine whether its web site qualifies as mobile-friendly. First, pull up the site on a mobile phone. If it fits the screen well and has buttons that are a clickable size, the site likely is mobile-friendly.

For a definitive answer to the question of whether a site is mobile-friendly, a church can visit Google's "Mobile-Friendly Test" web site, Boes said. Simply enter the URL of your congregation's web site on that page, and Google will tell you

see GOOGLE on p. 9

## GuideStone warns of Obamacare deadline, coverage penalties

DALLAS, Texas (BP) — Churches and ministries that reimburse their employees for individual health coverage may soon find themselves facing stiff penalties of up to \$36,500 per employee, per year, under the federal health care law commonly known as Obamacare, as a grace period expires June 30.

The penalties on employers who maintain employer payment plans were to begin in January, but the IRS granted a six-month reprieve.

Organizations that offer GuideStone health plans are not at risk of these penalties. GuideStone's health plans — both its personal and group plans — are church health plans and are considered group health plans under federal law and thus are not affected by these penalties.

"Fortunately, GuideStone health plan participants and the churches and ministries that employ them can rest assured that they can continue to pay for coverage as they have in the past and will meet the guidelines under the current law," said Donna Lively, managing director of insurance plans at GuideStone Financial Resources in Dallas.

"Organizations that don't utilize GuideStone should consult with their legal and tax advisors to determine how to comply with the letter of the law," she added.

GuideStone has developed new health coverage options

that may be appropriate for smaller churches. Additionally, churches with only one employee can apply for coverage for that lone staff member during the employee's first 60 days of employment.

For more information on how GuideStone may help churches with their health coverage needs, call (888) 98-GUIDE.

GuideStone encourages churches and ministries to

see DEADLINE on p. 9

### Inside this issue

Directions .....
Sunday School lessons .....
Editorial .....
Bibliocipher .....
How to Become a Christian .....
Revivals & Homecomings .....
Just for the Record .....
Classifieds .....



## From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS

### An important slice

The budget planning season for many (if not most) Mississippi Baptist churches has begun as budget committees begin meeting over the course of the summer to set 2016's priorities. With an economic recovery still ongoing (despite the rosy optimism of politicians), money remains tight everywhere and that includes church budgets. Tough decisions will have to be made.

What to maintain? What to cut? What to eliminate altogether? These are all questions church leaders will face in coming weeks and months. Never an easy process — it seems needs are always greater than income, even in good years — balancing the church budget for the coming year is going to remain a real challenge for many Mississippi Baptist churches.

As budgeteers proceed apace, there is an important slice in every church budget pie that should be protected from cuts at all costs: the Cooperative Program. It's just too important to all of us, and to a lost world in need of the Gospel.

For far too many Mississippi Baptists — and Southern Baptists in general — the Cooperative Program is the transparent, little-understood mechanism for funding virtually every activity undertaken on the state and national convention levels.

Begun in the 1920s, the Cooperative Program ensures that each Mississippi Baptist and Southern Baptist ministry receives a share of the funding pie by pooling the gifts made by church members throughout the state and the national conventions.

Without the Cooperative Program, most of these activities would wither and die. Some would survive, but just barely, by returning to the pre-Cooperative Program days of "society" funding where supporters of every needy cause would individually approach every church for a contribution to their cause.

If your church's pastor, music minister, and other staffers received quality educations at Southern Baptist seminaries, you can thank the Cooperative Program for helping maintain the campus, compensate faculty, and keep expenses as low as possible in many other ways.

If you pray daily for the many thousands of full-time missionaries commissioned by the Interna-

tional Mission Board and the North American Mission Board, you can thank the Cooperative Program for helping fund the administration of those agencies, which frees up gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions to be spent on mission fields.

Without the Cooperative Program, there would likely be no salvation testimonies from Camp Garaywa, Mississippi Baptists' Girls in Action campgroup in Clinton; or Central Hills Retreat, Mississippi Baptists' Royal Ambassador campground outside Kosciusko. Bible Drills wouldn't happen. Our state's Baptist universities would be hobbled. All are supported by the Cooperative Program.

There would be no Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Unit to respond in the name of Jesus whenever crisis grips a community — or whole countries like Haiti and Nepal. There would be no church planting effort in the burgeoning Hispanic community in the state.

Local church ministries are vitally important and should be supported, but there's also a whole big world out there waiting to hear about Jesus Christ. Apparently following the poor example of churches pastored by some of our most notable Southern Baptist "leaders," however, a disturbing number of Mississippi Baptist churches are choosing to give a trivial percentage to the Cooperative Program.

That's a shame, because funding 54 church members on a two-week mission trip to Mexico, while important, is not the same as funding 5,400 International Mission Board missionaries and their families around the world. Funding ten youth from the church to help the poor for a week in another state, while important, is not the same as funding 10,000 World Changers all across the country and now internationally.

The Cooperative Program is simply too important to minimize. Too much is at stake, and too little time is left before our Savior returns. It's not broke. It doesn't need fixing. It does need our undying, sacrificial support.

Just a little food for thought — and prayer — during this church budget season.

## The march toward infant baptism

Associated Baptist Press recently reported that Rodney Kennedy, pastor of First Church in Dayton, Oh., sprinkled an infant. The event was newsworthy because, by definition, a Baptist church does not baptize infants. To practice the latter is to forfeit being the former — or at least it used to be that way.

The article read as a congratulatory piece, as though it was one small step for a church but one giant leap forward for Baptists everywhere, no doubt a leap away from draconian biblical and confessional markers of Baptist identity.

One need not look to a CBF church to find believer's baptism being renegotiated. At least a few conservative Baptist churches have adopted, or have flirted with adopting, some form of dual baptism. While I have been blessed by the writings of many who practice pedobaptism, as one who is wholeheartedly Baptist, sprinkling infants — especially in erstwhile Baptist congregations — concerns me.

However, what concerns me most is not the rare "Baptist" church that occasionally sprinkles an infant. It is what's increasingly passing as credo-baptism (believer's baptism) these days. Within Southern Baptist life we have been on a steady march toward infant baptism, routinely baptizing children younger and younger in age.

As the Southern Baptist Task Force on Baptism reported, Southern Baptists continue to baptize a remarkably large number of young children, including those age five and under. This trend should prompt careful reflection and should remind us of some of the potential dangers associated with baptizing young children.

As a convictional Baptist it is hard for me to admit this, but when we baptize children too young to grasp the Gospel and, as a result, whose hearts haven't been affected by it, it is more troubling than sprinkling an infant. Why is this? Because when Presbyterians, for example, sprinkle infants, they anticipate the child will one day be converted. When we baptize young children we are testifying they have been converted.

This trend concerns me for biblical, pastoral, denominational, and parental reasons.

We must remember conversion re-



**Guest opinion**  
with Jason Allen

quires more than agreeing to facts about Jesus to be saved. Conversion is not merely intellectual; it is also affective. To be saved one must not only embrace facts; one must embrace Christ. One must not merely believe facts about Jesus; one must believe in Jesus. This happens through faith in Christ, repentance from sin, and submission of one's life to Him.

The point is not that a child cannot be converted. The point is that we should do our best to make sure conversion has happened in our children before baptizing them.

As for baptism, we do not believe in baptismal regeneration. Therefore, we should not feel an unbridled press to the baptistery. Being baptized is a profoundly essential step of obedience — one that is linked very closely with conversion — whereby one declares their allegiance to Christ, is baptized into the church, and depicts the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

A healthy understanding of conversion means we need not rush children to the baptistery, and a healthy understanding of baptism means that we shouldn't. The effects of true conversion will not evaporate like the morning dew. When in doubt as to whether a child is ready for baptism, it is best to give it time.

The practice of the late W.A. Criswell, pastor of First Church, Dallas, helped me navigate this issue. He encouraged young children — and older children who seemed to not grasp the Gospel — to "continue to take steps toward Jesus," but often instructed their parents to hold off on baptism. He winsomely affirmed the child's interest in following Christ and encouraged them to that end, but he did so without granting them assurance of conversion or baptizing them straightway.

Criswell's pattern is instructive for

see ALLEN on p. 9

## THE BaptistRecord

**Editor**  
William H. Perkins Jr.  
wperkins@mbcb.org

**Associate Editor**  
Tony Martin  
tmartin@mbcb.org

**Layout/Design**  
Megan Young  
myoung@mbcb.org

**Advertising**  
Emily Jones  
ejones@mbcb.org

**Circulation Manager**  
Amy Massey  
amassey@mbcb.org

**Editor Emeritus**  
Don McGregor

**Baptist Record Advisory Committee:**  
Camille Anding, Etta T. R. Darsey, Winona Whit Lewis, New Albany Derrick Wilson, Kosciusko Carolyn Reeves, Oxford Garland Boyd, Brookhaven

**Postmaster:**  
Send changes of address to: The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

**Send news, communication, and address changes to:** The Editor, Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

**Tel:** (601) 968-3800  
**Fax:** (601) 292-3330  
**E-mail:** baptistrecord@mbcb.org



VOLUME 139 • NUMBER 20 • ISSN-0005-5778

Published weekly except weeks of July 4 and Christmas by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, 515 Mississippi Street, Jackson, MS 39201. Subscription \$10.35 per year payable in advance. Economy plans available for cooperating Mississippi churches. Periodicals postage paid at Jackson, MS. Member, Association of State Baptist Papers. Deadlines: News items — one calendar week prior to requested publication date. Advertising — two calendar weeks prior to requested publication date. All submissions are subject to editing.

# Seminary student recovering from stabbing, carjacking

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — A Southern Seminary student who was stabbed and carjacked outside a hospital emergency room while making a pizza delivery says he forgives his attacker.

Josh Lewis, 19, has been employed at Spinelli's Pizzeria since last August and is a sophomore at Boyce College, the undergraduate school of Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Lewis says a man confronted him May 3 outside his car and demanded his keys while he was delivering a pizza to the emergency room at Norton Hospital in downtown Louisville. When Lewis noticed the man had a knife, he dropped the keys and ran toward the hospital.

Lewis says the man caught up with him and stabbed him in the back before taking off with his black Jeep Cherokee.

"I'm not really holding a grudge against him," says Lewis, who is from Detroit. "If he was in the same room as me right now, I would tell him what he did isn't okay, but I would tell him that I forgive him and try to share the Gospel with him and show him Christ."

After checking into Norton's emergency room, Lewis was transferred to the University of Louisville Hospital where he was treated for a collapsed lung and torn muscles. Doctors later realized the knife also punctured part of Lewis' liver. Lewis' mother, who flew in from Detroit, says the stabbing could easily have killed him. Lewis was released from the hospital May 7.

"We don't look at this as an accident or a fluke, but God's grace working in difficult situations," his mother Terri Lewis

says. "God spared him, and we have no doubt about it."

Louisville Metro Police spokesperson Dwight Mitchell told Southern Seminary News that investigators have not located or identified the suspect.

Since the story was first reported, Lewis has made headlines around the world after news surfaced that he somehow delivered the pizza after the attack. The story was covered in major news aggregation sites like BuzzFeed, USA Today, and BBC.

Although Lewis told Southern Seminary News on May 6 that he did not deliver the pizza, he now says that after conversations with co-workers and family, he is convinced he did somehow deliver the pizza.

While Lewis is receiving international recognition from celebrities and social media sites, the attention he is receiving from friends at Boyce College and Sojourn Community Church, where he is a member, is generating the most support for his recovery.

"Josh is always an upbeat young man. You can tell he has a great mind. He's likeable, well-respected," says Boyce Dean Dan DeWitt, who visited Lewis in the hospital several times.

"I've been thankful for all the Boyce students who have expressed their support of Josh. There was a small group of students huddled in the waiting room when I got there, and most of that small group stayed until 3 a.m. the first night he was in the hospital. We've had students there in the hospital literally around the clock, supporting him, supporting his family."



JOSH LEWIS

"I'm not really holding a grudge against him. If he was in the same room as me right now, I would tell him what he did isn't okay, but I would tell him that I forgive him and try to share the Gospel with him and show him Christ."

Josh Lewis  
Boyce College student

Terri Lewis, who calls it a "great comfort" to receive care from DeWitt, Lewis' classmates, and local churches, says, "The support from Boyce has been fantastic." She says Southern Seminary President R. Albert Mohler Jr., who was traveling on Sunday, called the family to express his support.

"I did not realize at all how many people were willing to set aside time in their day to spend time with me," Josh Lewis says. "It's just been really overwhelming almost the amount of support from Christian communities I've had, coming here and praying with me and letting me know that they're supporting me."

Many of those students supporting him are also members at Sojourn Church. Fellow church member John Mike McGuire, a Boyce graduate and Lewis' former dorm hall mate, was the first person at the hospital and has supported him throughout his hospital stay.

Clif Roth, a pastor on staff at Sojourn Midtown, says, "Because of the strength of our community here at Sojourn, it's not unusual to hear that someone from his [church community group] was immediately there and has been by his side the entire time."

Roth and Josh Rothschild, a Southern Seminary master of divinity student and Sojourn's

deacon of college students, brought Lewis his favorite ice cream and talked about his new and unexpected platform.

"He's a funny guy and made a few jokes. We talked a lot about his interactions with people and how it's become a platform for him in a way he couldn't even fathom or anticipate because of how viral this has gone. He talked about wanting to use this for God's glory and to share the Gospel with his coworkers," Roth says, noting that Sojourn will record a video of Lewis sharing the Gospel later this week.

Lewis' church and employer are raising funds for a new car, as well as medical expenses. A GoFundMe account created by Mack Welsh, Lewis' community group leader, has raised more than \$4,000 since May 4.

On May 6, Spinelli's Downtown held an all-day fundraiser, designating 50 % of its sales to benefit Lewis. Norton Hospital confirmed that it has agreed to match all donations from that event.

## Pastors to appeal Houston judge's ruling on petition drive

HOUSTON (BP and local reports) — The push for a referendum on a controversial Houston (Texas) ordinance has moved into appeals court, continuing the battle over whether sexual orientation and gender identity will be protected classes under the city's anti-discrimination laws.

"We talk about the days of my parents when poll taxes and other things were used to eliminate the process of the voting for minorities, and here we have a city mayor... who denies the entire city of Houston the right to vote," said Willie Davis, pastor of MacGregor Palm Community Baptist Church, at a news April 30 conference called by the Houston Area Pastors Coalition.

The comments by Davis, one

of nearly 100 individuals who circulated petitions to repeal the Houston Equal Rights Ordinance, came as pastors opposed to the ordinance announced their appeal of a district judge's ruling April 17 on a jury's mixed verdict two months earlier.

Judge Robert Schaffer's ruling left opponents 585 validated signatures short of qualifying for a citywide repeal vote in November. The ordinance went into effect after Schaffer's ruling.

The appeal announcement sparked a second round of harsh words by the city's lead attorney, Geoffrey Harrison, who said opponents' "misguided appeal sounds like a continuation of their three-ring circus of discrimination, intolerance, and

hate," according to a report in the Houston Chronicle.

After the April 17 district court ruling, Harrison said it was "a powerful smack-down against the forces of discrimination and intolerance." Houston Mayor Annise Parker, who has publicly stated she is a lesbian, had made passage of the ordinance a priority for her administration.

Andy Taylor, lead counsel for pastors opposing the ordinance, told the Southern Baptist TEXAN that the appeal has three elements.

First, a writ of mandamus asks the Texas Supreme Court to order Houston City Secretary Anna Russell to verify the voter registration of all 54,000 petition signers — something she has not done since stopping her count just

short of 20,000 after verifying the minimum number of signatures needed to pass the referendum.

Her signature verification subsequently was dismissed by Parker and then-City Attorney Dave Feldman.

Second, the appeal asks the Texas Court of Appeals to expedite the process, giving plaintiffs a hope of meeting the Aug. 18 deadline for placing the referendum on the November ballot, although the case is likely to go to the Texas Supreme Court.

Third, Taylor filed a writ of mandamus with the appellate court asking for the expedited process. A writ of mandamus is a request of a court to rule without the full benefit of court proceedings that can take six to 18 months.

A writ of mandamus is rarely granted, but Taylor said because of time constraints his clients have no adequate remedy to their complaint.

The petition for a referendum was launched after Houston's city council passed the controversial measure, called HERO by its supporters, in an 11-6 vote last May.

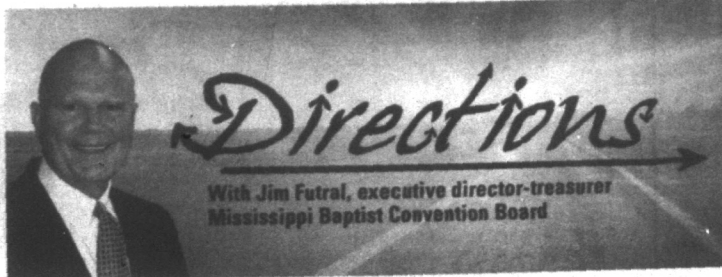
Opponents of HERO, led by the multi-ethnic No UNequal Rights Coalition, subsequently gathered nearly 54,000 signatures. Petitions circulated by 98 individuals underwent extensive legal challenges by city officials last August, at one point dropping the number of valid signatures to 3,905, though the petitions had notary public verifications.

Some time ago I was talking to a friend of mine who is a musician and has perfect pitch. He can pick out any note and tell you whether it's the perfect sound or not and he readily cringes if he hears an improper note whether it is vocal or by instrument. I have known a number of people through the years who have this incredible musical gift, but that's as close as I get to expertise — simply knowing them. I do not have that ability. As a result, a lot of music that some people think is atrocious, I may not care for, but it sounds fine to me.

In a conversation with my friend he was explaining to me why he had dropped out of church and only on the rarest of occasions would go to church. He just couldn't tolerate it. No, his issue was not hypocrites in the church or the service was too long or people being unfriendly or the preacher being unprepared. No, his problem was his problem of perfect pitch. He said it's hard to describe how it makes him feel when he hears a wrong note struck. He just shudders and so when he goes to church he sits in his pew and listens for the wrong notes.

The other day I was in a service and the person who was playing the piano played a stirring presentation of "To God Be the Glory" for the offertory. It was magnificent. With all the runs and powerful, majestic presentations, he must have played thousands if not over ten thousand notes in that one piece of music. Now for me, it was almost a stand-to-your-feet, shout "praise God" at the conclusion, but for someone with perfect pitch, I thought how possibly they would have heard one or two off notes and the day would be ruined for them. How incredibly sad that must be.

As it plays itself out week after week he began to realize that the only way he could deal with it is not deal with it. He dropped out of church. Not for a week or a month or a year, but for years and years, he stayed away, all because he could not tolerate a note of imperfection from an instrument or a soloist or even a choir. Since so few people are highly gifted and magnificently trained



## Perfect Pitch

that they possess this perfect pitch ability to pick out all the wrongs, it does not affect the population at large. On the other hand, there are many people who have developed perfection in other areas that it seems to drive them crazy when everyone else is not perfect like they are.

For instance, some people have perfect methods. They actually believe that the way they go about doing anything is the way that it's supposed to be done. Any departure from their methods is inexcusable and unforgivable. It was like when James and John had been on a mission trip for Jesus and they saw someone casting out devils in Jesus name but they went up and stopped him because he had not been involved in their group. John reported this to Jesus, "And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us." (Luke 9:50). Just because someone is not doing things according to your practices does not mean that they're not doing something to honor God or that God is not also using their methods.

It's not unusual in our day to talk to someone who describes their church as just being traditional. Maybe they're looking for a pastor and they want someone who is just a traditional pastor. Well, what do you mean by that? Do you mean that they're King James

only? Well, no we use other translations. Well, do you mean that you sing from the Baptist hymn book? Well, actually, we don't even have hymn books. We put it on the screen and everybody can sit there and see it together. Some people would not call that being traditional and some would really get upset if you change any of those methodologies. By the same token, there are people who are doing it different ways and think that that is traditional.

It seems to be that Jesus' indication was that if they're honoring God and not against the Lord, we would be wise to simply allow them to do what God is leading them to do and us to go on with what we're doing and all of us together seek to honor the Lord as we serve Him. If you are one who has perfect methods, God bless you. If your perfect methods enrage you, embitter you against everyone who's not just exactly like you, you might want to stop and see how perfect you really are in your methods.

There are some people who have perfect mouths. Now the mouth is an interesting thing and the power of the tongue, according to Scripture, has within it both to destroy or delight to hurt people or to help people. James in his little book says that if a man is able to control his tongue completely, he's a perfect man (3:2). I mean he's a totally

mature, unquestionably-in-control as God would have him to be, a person with a tongue that is mastered in every way and at every moment of the day. There are very few who have come to that place in life for sure. I always find it to be fascinating when someone is outraged against what they hear someone else saying and is so demeaning and passionate and filled with bitterness that they actually think their response is pure and perfect while it may be worse than what was said in the beginning.

A third thing, some people have perfect morals. In the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 7, Jesus tells us we need to be careful about our judging others and not go around trying to help someone else to get a little speck out of their eye when we've got a beam, a tree limb, in our own eye. He's talking about us presenting ourselves as the ultimate, perfect standard and it's just not so. You find it everywhere that sometimes parents deal with their children as though they never messed up when they were a child. In church, people are so quick to evaluate, pass judgment, criticize, and begin to erect the gallows for someone to be hung as though they had never stumbled or bumbled or in any way, messed up, or let people down. We strive to look to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith and to walk after Him, but we would truly be wise if we would be cautious as we go around watching for specks of dust in someone's eyes when we have boulders and planks stuck in our own sight.

It is truly a burdensome thing to live with perfect pitch or methods or mouths or morals, because none of us do. It tends to focus your attention on always looking for the bad, the mistake, the wrong decision, the hurtful word, rather than seeing the bigger picture where at times in wonderful ways and on glorious days God was able to use somebody beyond what you thought He ever could. To that Jesus would say pat them on the back, send them on the way, thank God for them, and celebrate the moment.

The author can be contacted at directions@mccb.org.

## College News



(Top) Pictured at the WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY Honors Convocation on April 29 are Ben Austin (left) of Zachary, La., and Valerie Bridgeforth, vice president for student support. Austin, a senior social science major, was honored with the Student Leadership Award for his many activities on campus, including service as the president of the Baptist Student Union and as Mr. William Carey University.



(Bottom) WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY students Carlos Casilla (right) of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, and Morgan Marfisi of Tomball, Texas, were awarded the Jenkins-Chastain Citizenship Awards, the highest honor given by the university, during the 2015 Honors Convocation on April 29. The Jenkins-Chastain Awards are given to senior students on an annual basis and recognize students who have made the most significant contributions to student and campus life in exemplifying qualities of citizenship upheld by the university.

### In other Church News:

➤ Stan Buckley, former senior pastor of First Church, Jackson, and founder and executive director of But God Ministries, will be the keynote speaker at the Mississippi College School of Law graduation May 15, 10 a.m., at First Church, Jackson. MC Law in Jackson enrolls about 430 students.



WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY graduates Patrick Gray, principal of Oak Grove Middle School, and Anna Morris, a teacher at Oak Grove Lower Elementary School, were named Administrator of the Year and Teacher of the Year by the Mississippi Teacher Center, a service of the Mississippi Department of Education, on April 23.



**STUDYING TOGETHER** — A group of fathers and sons from Denver Church in Denver, N.C., use The Gospel Project for their monthly discipleship events. (BP photo)

## The Gospel Project changes course in new curriculum

**NASHVILLE (BP)** — After three years and more than three quarters of a million weekly users, The Gospel Project is changing its approach.

Starting this fall, LifeWay Christian Resource's newest Bible study curriculum for all ages will go through the Bible chronologically. The Gospel Project: Chronological, will start from the beginning for a three-year cycle through the entire Bible.

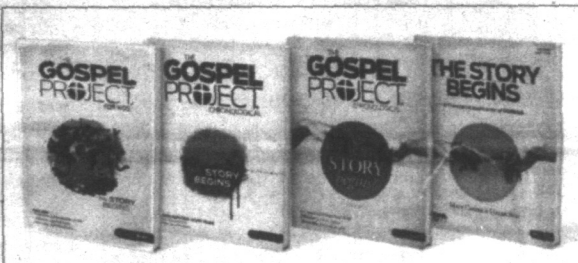
"This approach allows groups to understand biblical theology as it was progressively revealed in redemptive history," managing editor Trevin Wax said.

"We will spend 18 months in the Old Testament and 18 months in the New," Wax said, "with almost every study session aligned so that churches that want to make this journey together can unite all ages around the study of one central story per week."

When LifeWay first launched The Gospel Project in 2012, it marked the first time in more than a decade the publisher had released ongoing studies for children, students, and adults under one theme. Wax said creators were hoping 30,000 participants would use the materials at the start. Instead, it was serving more than 400,000 by the time it debuted and LifeWay scrambled to increase print runs and inventory, according to Wax.

Now, three years later, The Gospel Project continues to grow with more than 775,000 weekly users.

Many church leaders were eager and excited to start the curriculum, but some like Mark Gouge, director of children's ministry at



Brainerd Church in Chattanooga, Tenn., began using The Gospel Project with a plan to use something different in a few months. However, after seeing what he termed "unreal" results, he continues to use it.

The material also impacted Gouge personally. After completing a lesson on the Old Testament tabernacle and the sacrificial system, he tucked his four-year-old daughter into bed and was amazed at what she said. "Daddy, can I tell you a secret?" she asked. "Jesus died once as a sacrifice for me. He doesn't have to die every year on the day of 'Atoner.'" Gouge said he "wept like a baby."

In what he describes as a biblically saturated town, the children's ministry director says The Gospel Project is making a difference. "My kids are understanding the Gospel," he said.

To encourage more churches to try The Gospel Project, LifeWay is offering a free preview of the resources. Leaders can download one month of all the fall materials for free at GospelProject.com.

As part of the relaunch, on May 11, The Gospel Project will host a free online event titled Gospel. Life. Ministry. Wax said

it will feature "some of the most trusted pastors and church leaders who will explore how the Gospel relates to different areas of life and ministry."

More than 3,000 participants have already preregistered to hear from David Platt, John Piper, Louie Giglio, Tony Evans, and many others, including some of the contributors to The Gospel Project: Chronological.

Wax said their desire for the online event as well as every session in the material is "to point participants to the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the source of life transformation and the foundation for spiritual growth."

For church leaders like Gouge, that makes all the difference as the children in his ministry "are understanding the truths and how they connect to all of Scripture." He said the Gospel presentation made possible through the curriculum is "powerful."

As far as eliciting a reaction from the students, Gouge says The Gospel Project is on par with the most popular video games and cartoon characters.

"The kids sat there with mouths open," he said. "I've only seen Minecraft or Anna and Elsa drop the jaws of my kids."

## First Person: Needs are great in devastated Nepal

By David Platt  
Correspondent

As soon as I heard news about the earthquake in Nepal, I immediately thought of the people I met and the faces I saw just over a year ago, when I was walking on trails and sides of mountains in the area where the quake hit.

As I thought of the massive physical need that was already there on top of the massive spiritual need, and realized that an earthquake of this magnitude would have devastating effects across the region, I was drawn immediately to my knees. I cried out to God for His mercy and His might to be made known among the people in that area.

I'm also compelled to challenge you to think about how you can respond to this news. How can you do more than just flip the channel or turn to the next website when you see images showing what is going on in Nepal?

I encourage you, first and foremost, to pray. Don't underestimate the privilege that we've been given in prayer and the power that we have in participating with God in what He's doing in Nepal right now through prayer. God has ordained prayer as a means by which we participate with Him in what He's doing in the world.

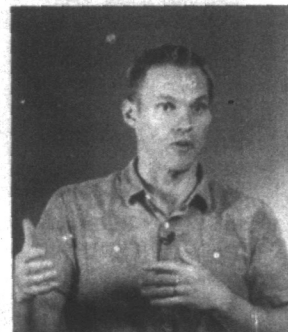
So pray. Pray like it matters: ■ Plead for God to show mercy and grace to the Nepali people. Plead for the church in Nepal, in the middle of the challenges that surround them, to be salt and light. Pray they will be strengthened in every way — physically, emotionally and spiritually — that they might be able to show and share God's love and His Gospel in the middle of this.

■ Pray for those who are without Christ, that the hope of Christ would become clear to them in these days.

■ Pray for the massive physical needs that surround both believers and unbelievers.

■ Pray for wisdom in the efforts under way to provide long-term relief to individuals and families that desperately need it.

I also challenge you to think through how you can use your resources to help the situation in Nepal. Baptist Global Response, the Southern Baptist humanitarian organization that partners with the International Mission Board, is on the ground in Nepal right now. They are working to find how



DAVID PLATT

we can best address short-term relief needs with long-term relief goals.

Providentially, just a couple of months ago our Baptist Global Response leaders were in Kathmandu training partners in disaster relief, so they are prepared and putting what they learned into practice right now. They need our support.

Finally, as we think about the needs of the world in a broader way, I realize this is a challenging and difficult time to actually go to Nepal, but this event might be a wake-up call in your life to realize in a fresh way that there are urgent physical and spiritual needs around the world.

Think through this question: "How can I live my life here to get the Gospel there?" Maybe that means being more open to going on a short-term trip. It may mean developing relationships in other parts of the world so when something like this happens you can draw on them for the spread of the Gospel.

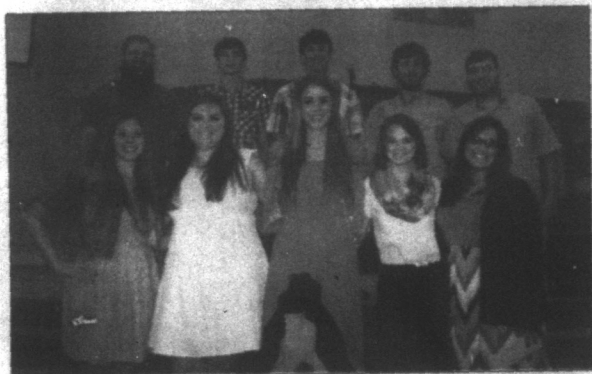
How can you spend your life with greater urgency to get the Gospel to those who need it most?

Don't just watch the news. Respond to the news according to the leadership of God's Spirit in your life, that God's glory might be made known amid some of the darkest and most difficult places in the world.

Platt is president of the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention in Richmond, Va. His commentary appears courtesy of Baptist Press. Edited for style.

Baptist Global Response has released \$50,000 for initial relief efforts in the aftermath of Nepal's massive earthquake, to provide hurting people with basic survival needs like water, shelter, food, and healthcare. To learn more, visit [gbrgr.org/](http://gbrgr.org/).

## Just for the Record



**IMMANUEL CHURCH, GREENWOOD**, recognized its high school and college graduates.



The children's group of **ARLINGTON CHURCH, BOGUE CHITTO**, held its annual Easter egg hunt in March. Shown are the participants. Matthew Green, pastor.



**BIG LEVEL CHURCH, STONE COUNTY**, recognizes its graduates.



The children of **CALVARY CHURCH, EUPORA**, participated in a children's program on Palm Sunday.

### In other Church News:

► **Pride Aside: A Father's Journey Through His Son's Addiction**, by Steve Hutton, director of missions logistics at Broadmoor Church, Madison, is now available at [PrideAside.org](http://PrideAside.org), or by contacting Hutton at (601) 427-2428. E-mail: [steve@prideaside.org](mailto:steve@prideaside.org). The book is also available at Amazon, iBooks, and Nook. Hutton is available to speak to church groups and other organizations.

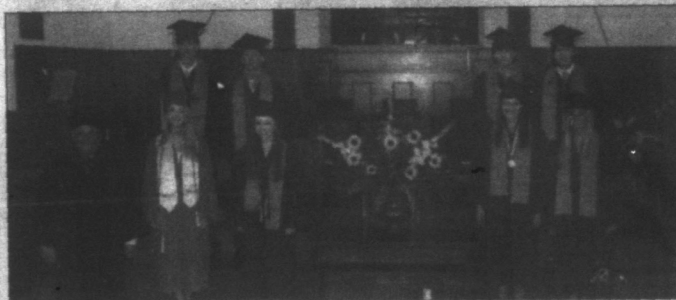


Members of **EAST MOSS POINT CHURCH, MOSS POINT**, honored their mothers by bringing framed pictures of their mothers. David Abbott, pastor.

**CALVARY CHURCH, BELMONT**, held a note burning ceremony Dec. 7, 2014. Calvary Church and New Life Church, Belmont, traded church buildings in 2005. Since the trade, Calvary has added a gymnasium, paved the parking lot, added a fire escape, and steeple. The church was able to pay off a 15-year note for \$109,241 in nine-and-a-half months.



The GAs and RAs of **TYBERTOWN CHURCH, TYBERTOWN**, recently held a food drive, taking the items they collected to the Walthall County Food Pantry.



**HICKORY CHURCH, NEW-TON ASSOCIATION**, celebrated Graduation Sunday May 3 with six K5 graduates, eight high school graduates, and three college graduates. Shown are the high schoolers with pastor Randy Rich.

**GOSS CHURCH, COLUMBIA**, held a baby dedication May 3. Shown from left are Elizabeth "Lizzy" Harper Cleland with parents Evan & Kelsey; Ava Brynleigh Burkett with parents Travis & Caryn Burkett, and Griffin Scott Whittington with parents Jordan & Danielle Whittington.



## Just for the Record



The children's choir, preschool choir, and nursery choir of **FIRST CHURCH, EUPORA**, performed during Easter Sunday services.



The Golden Choir of **FIRST CHURCH, CRYSTAL SPRINGS**, presented their spring musical on the church's Senior Adult Day. David LeCompte, minister of music.

The GAs from **PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH, BROOKHAVEN**, recognized missionaries' birthdays during Mission Madness.



**NORTHCREST CHURCH, MERIDIAN**, ordained Drake Nosco to the ministry Apr. 19. He is youth pastor at Suburban Church in New Orleans. Shown are his fiancée Bethany Crooks, Nosco, and pastor Dan Lanier.



Students from **LIBERTY CHURCH, NOXAPATER**, are shown using their personal communication devices such as iPhones to study Sunday School lessons. Teacher Steve Jones states that 90 - 100% of the students now study their lessons prior to Sunday School.



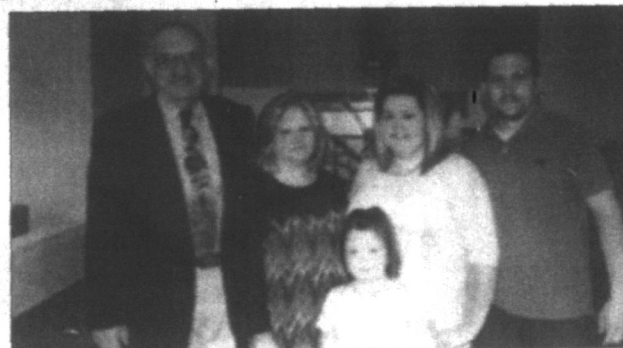
**POPLAR SPRINGS CHURCH, GOLDEN**, ordained two deacons Apr. 26. Shown are Gary "Bubba" Watson, pastor Jimmy Dale Sartin, and Tony Enis.

## Staff Changes



**BETHEL CHURCH, BOGUE CHITTO**, has called Chris Childers as pastor. He is shown with his family Michael, Kerri-ann, wife Tami, and Ashley.

**SAULS VALLEY CHURCH, MONTICELLO**, has called Winston Fortenberry as pastor. He is shown with his family.



# MC Law to hold poverty law symposium May 29

**JACKSON (Special)** — Mississippi College School of Law in Jackson and the Mission First Legal Aid Office will host Justice for All in our Community: Poverty Law Symposium, featuring attorney Bruce D. Strom of Elgin, Ill., a leading advocate for Gospel justice for the poor.

Strom left the practice of law to start Administer Justice, a full-service organization with more than 700 volunteers including over 260 attorneys who deliver

legal help and Gospel hope in accordance with Zechariah 7:9-10.

Strom, the author of Gospel Justice (Moody Publishers, Chicago), will speak on May 29 at 9 a.m. The event will be held in the student center auditorium at the law school's downtown campus. Strom will address the national problem of poverty, and discuss ways in which the Christian legal community can assist in implementing justice through attorneys who volunteer.

Patricia Gandy, founding director of the Mission First Legal Aid Office, will also serve as a speaker in addition to Jackson attorney and author Martin Willoughby.

The event costs \$150 per person before May 22, and \$175 per person after May 22. It is open to the public.

For additional event and registration information, contact Bethany Cole, public relations coordinator, at (601) 925-7149, or visit law.mc.edu/cle/.

## Multi-Ethnic Council sets priorities for reaching out to minority groups

**ATLANTA (BP)** — Listening to the hubbub of voices of the Multi-Ethnic Advisory Council as they met in small groups, Frank S. Page, president of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Executive Committee in Nashville, noted, "Hearing you talk and debate and quote Scripture in your various accents and your various perspectives [reminds me] how rich we are as a family of God to have all of you at the table."

Guided by chairman Timmy Chavis, pastor of Bear Swamp Church in Pembroke, N.C., the council reviewed the biblical basis of missions, evangelism, and discipleship. Members also considered questions about theological education, ethics, religious liberty, and the Cooperative Program posed by Ken Weathersby, Executive Committee vice president for convention advancement and a liaison to the group.

The council, representing numerous language, ethnic, and racial fellowships within the SBC, explored how their churches can more fully participate in convention processes and reflected on ways the convention can better serve the needs of their respective churches. SBCLIFE reports in its current issue, released this month.

The council is tasked with helping Executive Committee and SBC entity leaders more fully understand and appreciate the perspectives ethnic churches and church leaders bring to the common task of reaching the nation and all nations with the Gospel.

Lennox Zamore, pastor of Ebenezer Memorial Church in Saint Thomas, Virgin Islands, identified seven passages group members used to underscore the biblical basis for missions

and evangelism, with Matthew 28:18-20 as the dominant text.

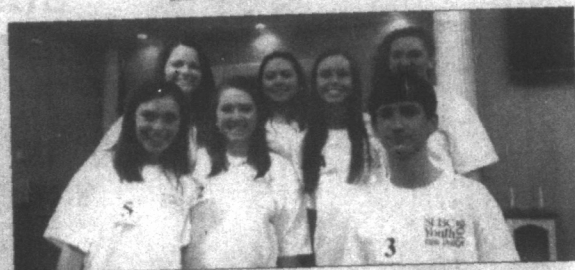
"As a missions framework, we used the phrase, 'As you go, evangelize; as you evangelize, disciple; and as you disciple, baptize,'" Zamore said.

Ben Mishin, pastor of Life Way Church in Philadelphia, noted, "The biblical basis for evangelism is found in Acts 1:8 — 'You will be My witnesses,'" he said.

The most impressive rationale for missions and evangelism "is the life and ministry of Jesus Christ," Mishin said. "He came into the world, so we should go out into the world. Jesus not only communicated with people; He served people and provided an example for people."

"The life of Jesus, His redeeming grace" is the heart of missions and evangelism, he said.

## Bible Drill



**SOUTH LOUISVILLE CHURCH, LOUISVILLE,** recognizes its Bible drillers.



**CALVARY CHURCH, BOGUE CHITTO,** recognizes its Bible drillers. Hal Hatten, pastor.



**SLAYDEN CHURCH, MARSHALL ASSOCIATION,** recognizes Faye Sanders for 11 years in Bible drills. She continues Bible drill classes after suffering a stroke five years ago.

## MSAudio LLC

Design & Integration of Professional Audio, Video, & Lighting  
Church, Conference Room, School  
Equipment sales, service and installation

**Trooper Hales**  
info@msaudiollc.com

P.O. Box 1575  
Clinton, MS 39060

Ph 601-923-9947  
Fax 601-924-2880

## Truth is not relative.

Find it in the One who is the way, truth, and life.

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life.

From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Southern Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

## MS POSITIONS

**WEST LAUREL BAPTIST CHURCH IN LAUREL, MS IS SEEKING A FULL-TIME ASSOCIATE PASTOR OF WORSHIP AND YOUNG ADULTS.** Please send resumes to West Laurel Baptist Church, Attn: Personnel Committee, 1400 W 5th Street, Laurel, MS 39440 or email to wlbchurch@yahoo.com.

**VICTORY BAPTIST CHURCH IN MATHISTON, MS, IS ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR EITHER A BI-VOCATIONAL OR A FULL-TIME PASTOR.** Please send resumes to: Victory Baptist Church, ATTN: Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 12, Mathiston, MS.

**ENTERPRISE BAPTIST CHURCH IN ENTERPRISE, MS IS ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR A FULL TIME STUDENT MINISTER.** Job description available upon request. Please send resumes to Attn: Student Minister Search Committee, Enterprise Baptist Church, PO Box 186, Enterprise, MS 39330, or email to jsmppson241@gmail.com

**EASTWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH IN INDIANOLA, MS IS IN SEARCH OF A FULL TIME PASTOR.** Please send resumes to: Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 466, Indianola, MS 38751 or email to Shirley Betts at sbetts@bellsouth.net.

**ENON BAPTIST CHURCH IS SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTER OF YOUTH.** Send resumes to: 2604 Carrollton Rd. Grenada, Ms: 38901 or email- enonbaptistchurch@outlook.com or call- (662)226-0778.

**NEEDED: FULL TIME OR BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTER OF YOUTH AND CHILDREN AT ASHLAND BAPTIST CHURCH IN ASHLAND, MS.** Send resumes to Mr. Stanley Poff, 285 Carter Flats, Ashland, MS 38603 or email to stanleypoff@yahoo.com

**PART-TIME YOUTH MINISTER NEEDED AT NEW SIGHT BAPTIST CHURCH, BROOKHAVEN, MS.** Please send resumes to: Youth Minister Search Comm. 629 Forest Trail Brookhaven, Ms. 39601

# BIBL iO C i P H E R

UEQ YLO DITMSLP NTIPL LOI

NAIYPTDIE YTE, UEQ HIUWWOQ LAG

AE YHUQQAES VCTPLOY, UEQ CUAQ

LAG AE U GUESOI; DOVUMYO PLOIO

HUY ET ITTG NTI PLOG AE PLO AEE.

CMBO PHT: YOZOE

Clue: C = L

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Titus 2:11

By Charles Marx, 1932-2004, © 2005

## Submission Guidelines

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published.

Preferred method: news may be submitted electronically to the e-mail address below, and must be included in the message segment of an e-mail form. Secondary method: news may be typewritten or neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper and mailed. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone. Due to ever-present virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments in JPEG format are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs must be submitted electronically via e-mail, as attachments in JPEG format. Hard copy photographs mailed through the postal service will not be accepted. Photographs must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, buildings, or object-only photographs will be printed. Photographs containing inappropriate gestures and objectionable clothing will not be published. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items that do not reproduce well on newsprint are generally not publishable.

There is no guarantee that news items and/or photographs will be published, and unsolicited material will not be acknowledged or returned. All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date. Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. These guidelines are not meant to be exhaustive.

Submit news to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

## MARRIAGE

cont. from p. 1

cannot assume people share our understanding of marriage," Moore said in a written statement for Baptist Press.

Based on the April 28 oral arguments, many observers predicted the justices will divide along ideological lines. The more conservative justices — John Roberts, Antonin Scalia, Clarence Thomas, and Samuel Alito — in support of the states' authority to define marriage. The more liberal justices — Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Stephen Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor, and Elena Kagan — in support of a constitutional right to gay marriage.

Kennedy, who was nominated to the court by U.S. President Ronald Reagan, again appears to be the swing vote but his past opinions in other cases seem to indicate he will come down on the side of same sex couples.

The oral arguments took place at a time when same sex marriage is legal in 37 states and the District of Columbia. The state total nearly triples the 13 states where it was legal in mid-2013. Court rulings have been responsible for producing legal same sex marriage in more than two-thirds of those states.

## DEADLINE

cont. from p. 1

remain vigilant about the Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare, and the related administrative policies that can create significant challenges for churches.

"This is just one of the myriad challenges facing all Americans, but especially churches and ministries thanks to the health care reform law," GuideStone President O.S. Hawkins said. "While we continue to wait for Congress or the courts to provide relief, the churches and ministries we serve can remain confident that GuideStone will advocate for them

with legislators and regulators and will provide useful information to help them comply with this law."

GuideStone has made resources available on its web site to help churches and ministries understand the health care reform law and its requirements on employers and employees. More information can be found at GuideStone.org/HealthReform.

Also, GuideStone has updated its popular resource, Reimbursement Vehicles and the ACA: Impacts for Employers. It is available free online at GuideStone.org/HealthReform/ReimbursementVehicles.

## GOOGLE

cont. from p. 1

whether it is mobile-friendly as well as provide links to information about how to improve the site.

Boes said regardless of the change to Google's search algorithm, it is important for churches to optimize their web sites for mobile traffic. Since the Missouri Baptist Convention

made its web site mobile friendly in October, he said, mobile traffic to the site has doubled and the number of users who leave the site without clicking on any links has decreased.

Becoming mobile-friendly "is only going to get more important for any website that's out there, whether or not you're a church, as more and more people look to the cell phone as their primary Internet device," Boes said.

## ALLEN

cont. from p. 2

every pastor. You can joyfully and wholeheartedly press the accelerator on the Gospel while tapping the brakes on the baptistery. That is not being duplicitous. This is shepherding the flock of God.

While the Southern Baptist Convention has no mechanism (nor should we) for policing such matters, as a convention of churches we do encourage ourselves toward certain practices and expectations. Perhaps in our zeal for increasing baptism

numbers, we've not always given enough scrutiny to whom we are baptizing. This has contributed, in part, to the plague of unregenerate church members.

Many of God's mightiest men in church history experienced conversion at a young age. I do not question their conversion stories — I thank God for them. Likewise, when a precocious young child understands the Gospel, repents, embraces Christ, and reflects the fruits of conversion, we should celebrate that and baptize them as well. If they lack any of these ingredients, caution and patience is key.

Let's be quick to point our children to the Lord Jesus Christ, but let's be a bit slower to point them to the baptistery. The local church, our children, the integrity of baptism, and the witness of our denomination are all too precious for us to mess this up.

Allen is president of Midwestern Seminary in Kansas City, Mo. His commentary appears here courtesy of Baptist Press. Edited for length and style. Allen's unedited commentary can be read at jasonallen.com.

## CLASSIFIEDS

**FOR SALE 2003 FORD E-450 - 29 PASSENGER BUS.** 7.3 Diesel engine (only 120,000 miles). Federal Body, Good tires and brakes, new paint and battery. Excellent Condition. \$29,900.00. Contact CALLAHAN BUS SALES, Oxford, MS. Phone 662-514-1749 or 662-234-3700.

**FOR SALE 2002 FREIGHTLINER 2500 HC SPRINT - 15 PASSENGER VAN.** 2.7L Diesel (Mercedes). 70,200 miles. Auto transmission, cruise control, power windows & locks, front & rear air-conditioning. New tires. Excellent Condition. \$21,500.00. Contact CALLAHAN BUS SALES, Oxford, MS. Phone 662-514-1749 or 662-234-3700.

**TIME SHARE FOR RENT OR SALE.** Branson, MO — 2 bedroom lock off. Great price! Phone 601-437-8978.

**GATLINBURG RENTALS:** Cabin \$95/night and Condo \$75/night. Contact: 832 922 0401 or E-mail: pdw4760@gatt.net for information and booking.

**STAINED GLASSWORKS, INC.,** serving MS & AL since 1992. Call 800-605-2970

**CHURCH PEW UPHOLSTERY, FREE ESTIMATES.** Davis Upholstery, Quiltman, Miss., phone 601-776-6617.

**GET THE BEST RATES ON:** Health Insurance and Medicare Supplements. Call 1-800-541-8196 or visit [www.TurnerInsuranceOnline.com](http://www.TurnerInsuranceOnline.com)

**AFFORDABLE BEACHSIDE VACATION CONDOS:** Gulf Shores & Orange Beach, AL. Rent direct from Christian Family Owners, lowest prices on the Beach. [www.gulfshorescondos.com](http://www.gulfshorescondos.com), 205-556-0368, 205-752-1231, 251-752-2366.

**STAINED GLASS:** new windows and repairs. Hopper Stained Glass, Jackson, 601-502-0202

**WINDOW AND SCREEN SHOP - WINDOWS AND STORM WINDOWS BUILT TO FIT YOUR OPENING.** Plus new window screens and rescreen old screens. For the months of May and June. 10% off in stock fiberglass screens and in stock rails on all orders brought to shop. Call Tom Cook - 601-709-4879

**WWW.SEBRENHOMEIMPROVEMENT.COM.** Christian owned Don & Rita Sebre. 601-992-2092. All home improvements, siding, energy efficient windows, metal & shingle roofs, screen & sunrooms, patio covers, decks, room additions, kitchen & bath upgrades.

## CD or IRA COMING DUE?

**15%  
First Year  
GUARANTEED**

Includes First Year 9% Bonus

Learn the Safe & Secure Way to Earn Stock Market Linked Return Without Market Risk to Your Principal.

**L.D. O'Mire**  
Financial Services

**1-800-844-3254**

Serving you for Over 30 Years



Guaranteed subject to the cash value of the investment. Minimum investment of \$25,000. The subject to the terms of the plan. This is a sample illustration and does not represent an actual investment. Please consult your advisor for more information. © 2005 L.D. O'Mire. All rights reserved.



# THE VILLAGE VIEW



**Dr. Rory Lee, Executive Director**

P.O. Box 27

Clinton, MS 39060-0027

(601) 922-2242

[www.baptistchildrensvillage.com](http://www.baptistchildrensvillage.com)

## GIFTS OF HONOR AND MEMORY

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

### FEBRUARY 2015 MEMORIALS

Bertha G. Johnson  
Mr. Benjamin N. Evans  
Benjamin Moore & Co.  
Irene Johnson  
Mrs. Jeanne Y. Tapp  
Nancy Jordan  
Mr. & Mrs. Tony L. Warnock  
John Wesley King  
Mr. & Mrs. L. M. Collins  
Rev. Oliver Ladnier  
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Pilgrim  
Mr. & Mrs. John T. Crout  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert E. Peters  
Mr. & Mrs. Turner A. Brown  
Mr. David Morrison  
Mrs. Connie Tanner  
Mrs. Janice S. Partridge  
Mrs. Rebecca Lamb  
Mr. & Mrs. Harry O'Neal  
Judge Roy Noble Lee  
Mrs. Joy B. Roberts  
Mrs. Betty Loftin  
Mr. & Mrs. Harold Lowery  
Gladys Lofton  
Ms. Katherine Smith  
Michael (Mike) Love  
Mr. & Mrs. Rudy Grenn  
Jo Ann Lowery  
Ms. Jeanette S. Hellums  
Elton Loyd  
Mr. & Mrs. Tommy Baird  
Mr. & Mrs. Elton Loyd  
Mrs. Marsha Kenneth  
Jimmy Luper  
Whitesand BC  
Laverne Martin  
Mrs. Shirell Betts  
Jesse P. Matthews Jr.  
Millsaps College, Office of Communications  
Mrs. Kimberly Hardy  
Brunini, Grantham, Grower & Hewes, PLLC  
Griffin & Griffin Exploration

LLC  
Matthews, Cutrer & Lindsay, PA  
Mississippi Blood Services, Inc.  
Mr. & Mrs. Charles E. Rowan  
Mr. & Mrs. Charles R. Lindsay, Jr.  
Mr. & Mrs. David A. Cerutti  
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Cofsky  
Mr. & Mrs. Edgar Tenent  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Reece  
Mr. & Mrs. Louis Gregory  
Frascoigna  
Mr. & Mrs. Marc V. Jones  
Mr. Alon W. Bee  
Mr. Mike Chapman  
Ms. Clara C. Daniel  
Ms. Glenda B. Little  
Regions Bank  
Ronny & Virginia Selden  
Tom Butchart, CPA  
Buddy Ellzey, CPA  
Dal Garber  
Kimberly DeWitt  
Richard & Vera Golombeck  
Helen Sullivan May  
Mr. & Mrs. Lane White  
Mr. Winbourne Sullivan  
Mrs. Martha Nell May  
Mr. & Mrs. J. M. Smiley  
Dr. Joe McKeever  
Dr. & Mrs. Anthony S. Kay  
Margaret McKeever  
Mr. R. N. Humphreys  
E. L. (Buddy) McKenzie  
Addie Kirkland, Charlie  
Brister & Family  
Johnnie McKnight  
Buddy & Linda Meyer  
Minnie (Parker) McNece  
Mr. & Mrs. Clarence Prestage  
Ms. Jay Johnson Kell  
Mrs. Juanita McWilliams  
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel A. Smith  
O. W. Mendrop  
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Oakes  
Ronnie Mock  
Mr. & Dr. Herman L. Dungan

Mr. George Murphy  
Mrs. Pat McDaniel  
Mr. Jim Nelson  
Mr. & Mrs. John B. Wright, Jr.  
James Edward Newman  
Mr. & Mrs. Rudy Grenn  
Mr. John Odum  
Mrs. Virgie L. Davis  
Pamela Dixon Ortlieb  
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Van Norman  
Bob Palmer  
Mrs. Peggy Palmer  
Bill Parker  
Mr. & Mrs. Cliff Mote  
J. V. & Mary K. Parker  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael W. Parker  
William Randolph (Bill) Parker  
Mrs. Glenda C. Fry  
Mrs. Robbie Perry  
Mrs. Joy B. Roberts  
Jackie Philliber  
Ms. Katherine Smith  
Mrs. Willie Bell Priest  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert E. Brown  
Mr. & Mrs. Billy R. Havard  
Mr. & Mrs. Ron K. Phillips  
Mrs. Ann Randall  
Mr. & Mrs. James E. Dixon  
Joel Dillard Ray  
Mr. & Mrs. Bob Bates  
Mrs. Margaret Rice  
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Flanagan  
Christopher Rives  
Mrs. Nancy W. Wilbanks  
Spencer Robinson  
Mr. & Mrs. Hiram P. Whittington  
Ms. Libby N. Walsten  
Mr. Thomas Russum  
Miss Sarah M. Smith  
Thomas Russum Sr.  
Mr. & Mrs. David B. Ingram  
Ethel Sanford  
The Ha-Ha's  
George Marvin Sansing Sr.  
Mr. George B. Smith  
James D. Saunders  
Mrs. Lois A. Saunders  
Bob Scarbrough  
Mrs. Ann Spradlin  
Mr. James Shurley Sr.  
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Dew  
Martha Sue Sills  
Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Wigington  
Dorothy Annette Lambert Sligh  
Mr. David Dumas  
Billy Smith  
Mr. & Mrs. David B. Ingram  
Carolyn Smith  
Ms. Katherine Smith  
Dr. Jim Smith  
Rev. & Mrs. William B. Webb  
L. Graham Smith  
Mrs. Nancy W. Wilbanks  
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Coward  
Ms. Bettye Stewart  
Ms. Ruby Smith  
Mr. & Mrs. Brooks H. Polk, Jr.  
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Speed  
Mr. & Mrs. John A. Polk  
Jack Spell  
Mr. & Mrs. John T. Crout  
David (Top) Stephens  
Mr. & Dr. Herman L. Dungan  
Mr. & Mrs. John D. Polk  
Arthur T. Sumrall  
Mr. Andy Oakes & Carrie Oakes  
Ruth Ann Sutton  
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Burkheimer  
Lynn Switzer  
Mr. & Mrs. Don F. Sherwood  
Mrs. Margaret Williams  
Ramon Tate Sr.  
Mrs. Edith M. Aldridge  
Robert Tharp  
Mr. & Mrs. Don F. Sherwood  
Mrs. Margaret Williams  
Mamie Threet  
Mount Pleasant BC  
Betty Ruth Wall  
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy W. Welch  
Lanny Wallace  
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Coward  
Mr. Doris Ward

Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy W. Hardy  
Mrs. Pam Warnock  
Ms. Helen R. Wright  
Larry Watson  
Ms. Katherine Smith  
Mrs. Julia Wells  
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry E. Breakfield  
Carl Wilbourn  
Jean, Mike, Joy & Scott Moss  
Rev. R. L. Willcutt  
Mr. & Mrs. E. C. Parsons  
Archie Wright  
Mr. & Mrs. David B. Ingram  
David A. Wright  
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Melton & Family  
Dot Wyatt  
Miss Lyn Scott & Children

### MARCH 2015 HONORS

Mrs. Janet Beasley  
Ms. Nancy F. Patrick  
Carie Dever Boaz  
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry V. Helms  
Joe and Judith Davis  
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry V. Helms  
Mrs. Carolyn Guyse  
Ms. Nancy F. Patrick  
Dr. & Mrs. Gerald Hasselman  
Mrs. Vicki McCall  
Rev. & Mrs. Higdon Herrington  
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Bennett  
Mr. & Mrs. Troy Moore  
Mrs. Lona M. Southerland  
Bro. & Mrs. Tom Murphy  
Mrs. Lona M. Southerland  
Darby Nowell  
Ms. Kaye M. Henderson  
Chrystelle Thames  
Mrs. Patricia Hasselman  
Lois Umfress  
FBC Pontotoc

### MARCH 2015 MEMORIALS

Mrs. Archie Battle Aaron

Mr. & Mrs. Jerry M. Howell  
Helen Tucker Allen  
Mrs. Betty A. Aden  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard A. Smith  
Sam Altman  
Larry & Judy Berry  
Joe Bailey  
Ms. Carolyn C. Pogue and Family  
Mrs. Margie Bailey  
Mrs. Lona M. Southerland  
Mrs. Edna Barringer  
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Brents  
Mrs. Sadie Barron  
Mr. & Mrs. David Anderson  
Mrs. Maddie Baylis  
Mrs. Mary J. Henderson  
Mr. Melvin Beach  
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins  
Mrs. Mac Bigby  
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins  
Emma Blackwell  
Mr. & Mrs. Charles E. Blackwell  
Mrs. Lib Blansett  
Pheba BC  
Inez Blaylock  
Mr. J. Mark Scobey  
Dr. Willard Boggan  
Mr. & Mrs. Price Toler  
Mrs. Bettie Boyd  
Ms. Mary Simmons  
Mr. Wilson Brasher  
Meredith & Jimmy Creekmore  
Mr. & Mrs. Gregg T. Tindle  
Mr. & Mrs. Percy J. Peeler  
Mrs. Eva Nell Milton  
Maurice Braswell  
Mr. & Mrs. Fred Ervin  
Mrs. Billie Breland  
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Bennett  
Bebe Ann Brooks  
Mr. Charles W. Holmes  
Mrs. Ann Spradlin  
Grace Brown  
Bill Rimes and Ann R. Brumfield  
Mr. J. L. Brown  
Mr. & Mrs. Curtis A. Buchanan  
Mr. Joe Buchanan  
Mr. & Mrs. Curtis A. Buchanan  
Jahazel Buckley  
Mr. Ted Buckley

Larry Burchfield  
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins  
Bryan D. Campbell  
Mr. Andy Oakes and Carrie Oakes  
Mary Lee Carter  
Mr. & Mrs. Ernest L. Scruggs  
Ivan Case  
Mr. & Mrs. James Crosby  
Mr. Harold Chambers  
Mr. & Mrs. Curtis A. Buchanan  
Charles Michael Champion  
Mr. & Mrs. Terry E. Champion  
Mrs. Rosemary Cheek  
Men's SSC, Parkway BC  
Benny Clark  
Mrs. Glenda C. Fry  
Gwen Cleghorn  
Mrs. Floyd Robbins  
Mrs. Ann Cole  
Mr. Kirk Vandevender  
Marty Cornwell  
Bill Rimes and Ann R. Brumfield  
Mrs. Martha Sue Cox  
Mr. & Mrs. Danny E. Daves  
Jo Creech  
Mr. & Mrs. Gene D. Saucier  
Mark Glenn Deason  
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Gilmore  
Randy & Susie Williams  
Cory & Carlee  
William R. "Richie" Defenbaugh  
Mrs. Margaret M. Davis  
Mr. & Mrs. Jay Gore, III  
Linda Dempsey  
Mrs. Paula Bane  
Mrs. James Dickey  
Mrs. Joy B. Roberts  
Mrs. Janette Dodd  
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins  
Margie Doris  
Mrs. Ann Spradlin  
Charles Dukes  
Mr. & Mrs. Bruce D. Brumfield  
Leland Dunn  
Eddieyton BC  
Cameron Elkins  
Ms. Carolyn C. Pogue and Family  
Mr. Mike Ellis  
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins

## BCV EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The BCV employs Christian, mission-minded, husband and wife teams, without dependent children or pets, to serve in the position of Houseparents. The couples must be mature Christian adults with personal integrity, character and of good reputation with standards and ethics expected of any member of The Baptist Children's Village staff.

They receive a salary with benefits and are provided a private bedroom and meals while on duty. The primary job responsibility of Houseparents is to maintain a home-like environment that models healthy, Christian family living for children and youth residents. They are the primary caregivers and help with everything from transportation and homework to laundry and meals when on duty.

Houseparent responsibilities are varied and somewhat dependent upon which campus and to which cottage the couple is assigned. However, all Houseparents need to be in good physical, mental and emotional health. They must be cooperative and comfortable working in a team environment.

To apply for the current Houseparent openings, please contact Celeste Cade at [ccade@baptistchildrensvillage.com](mailto:ccade@baptistchildrensvillage.com) or 601-922-2242.

A complete job description and application may be downloaded at [www.baptistchildrensvillage.com](http://www.baptistchildrensvillage.com).

## True Hope • Malachi 1:1-11

When Jesus was asked "Which is the great commandment in the Law? He said, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment." (Matthew 22:37 NKJV), and His response has not changed.

Malachi begins his prophetic words affirming God's love for us and describing the lack of pure love from His people. Would God ask the same today? God revealed to the church at Ephesus in Revelation 2 that they had left their first love. What would He say today?

### True Love (Malachi 1:1-5)

"I have loved you," says the Lord." (Malachi 1:2 NKJV)

Malachi begins his prophecy with "The burden of the word of the Lord." v.1

This is not a pleasant word, but rather a stern word. God was not happy with the actions of His people. They were a covenant people but they treated God flipperly. Malachi reminds them of the relations of God to Jacob and Esau. "Jacob I have loved, Esau, I hated." God has never wavered in His expression of love and favor on the people of Israel. The Edomite descendants of Esau claim to rebuild but God rejects their actions as they gloated over the destruction of Jerusalem. They would see God's sovereign greatness. "You

shall see and you shall say, The Lord magnified beyond the border of Israel." (v. 5)

### True Worship (Malachi 1:6-10)

"If I am the Father, where is My honor? If I am the Master, where is My reverence?" (Malachi 1:6)

The priests were offering defiled food on the altar, as the people brought sickly unacceptable animals to the temple for sacrifice. They would not dare bring such an offering to their governor. Yet, they wanted favor from God with unacceptable sacrifices. He would rather have them close the doors of the temple rather than defile the temple. "I have no pleasure in you." v. 10

Their worship was unacceptable because their offering was unacceptable, yet they came anticipating God to bless their worship.

How do you think God accepts our worship? Do we love Him with all of our heart, soul, and mind? Do we bring the proper

offering to the Lord? Do we give ourselves in service?

In Luke 21 Jesus compared the worship offering of the rich to that of the widow who gave only two mites. "For all these out of their abundance have put in an offering for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had." (Luke 21:4)

### True Greatness (Malachi 1:11)

"My name shall be great among the Gentiles; in every place incense shall be offered in My name, and a pure offering; For My name shall be great among the

nations," says the Lord of Hosts." (Malachi 1:11b NKJV)

Malachi proclaimed the name of the Lord shall be properly honored among the names with worship and offering that is acceptable unto the Lord of Hosts. He was reminding the people of the greatness of God in the midst of their profaning Him with defiled worship. He lays the blame at the feet of the priests for accepting

their defiled offering. They should have instructed the people to bring the proper sacrifice, pure and acceptable to God

God expects us to come to worship with pure hearts, cleansed by His grace, giving Him the very best of our life and the first fruits of our labors. Unfortunately too often, we come giving Him a token of our affections and the leftovers of our labor. Yet, we want God to bless our efforts. Is God saying something to us in response? Could the decline in our churches be the proportionate response of God to our expression of love to Him?

God declares His name SHALL be great...because He is GREAT and MIGHTY and worthy of our praise. We are not to just go through the motions of worship with a few hymns, a token gift, and a sermon. We are coming in the presence of the King of Kings and Lords of Lord who alone is worthy of our praise. Let us treat Him with the dignity, the honor, the priority of worship He alone deserves, proclaiming as Isaiah did "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6 NKJV)

Young is retired Sunday School Director, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, and a member of Ridgecrest Church, Madison.

## Stick with Service • Stick with Service

Are you stuck yet?

We are four weeks into our six week unit on making relationships stick like glue. Stick with love, stick with encouragement and stick with forgiveness: these three "bonding agents" are certain to bless any relationship that is first based on a relationship with Christ. This week, we add "service" to the mix and watch the blooming of something wonderful.

When the angel Gabriel was dispatched from God to Nazareth to make a special delivery birth announcement to a virgin named Mary, we were able to observe the first earthly act of the story of salvation. Mary's response to the Lord's unique assignment for her was to say: "Behold, the bond servant of the Lord. Be it done to me according to Thy Word." In Luke 1:38, Mary agreed to SERVE God by allowing Our Lord Jesus to be carried in her womb. Her relationship with God was based on her willingness and desire to serve Him.

At what we have called "the last supper" in the Upper Room in Jerusalem, we witness a major prelude to the cross. In John 13, after supper, Jesus washed the feet of the disciples, setting the example of His desire for them to seek ways to serve Him by serving one another and by

reaching out in service to others for Jesus' sake. Without question, Calvary was the greatest act of service ever rendered. God served man sacrificially by offering His only Son for our salvation. No greater love than that.

Thus, the life of Jesus began, continued and ended with service. True followers of Jesus should be self-equipped with a basin and a towel and a full waterpot. All of our relationships should be nurtured with service which calls for an outward focus on the needs of others. Service begins where our needs are set in second place. I call this "others most to the uttermost."

In Galatians, Paul reminds readers that love for neighbors is the fulfillment of the whole law. Don't argue with that because Jesus is the One being quoted here. Just pick up your towel and find some feet to wash. The joy of service is what happens during and after service is offered. The one being served receives a sweet

blessing. Additionally, the one doing the serving is blessed with inexpressible personal fulfillment. Both are encouraged toward a deeper commitment to serve which binds them even more closely to Jesus and each other.

When we seek to bear one another's burdens, we are being a servant. Servants are never too big for their britches. Servants never compare themselves to others. They are too busy seeking ways to minister to others. That's the way it is supposed to happen.

What if it really did? What if each of us truly accepted the mantle of servanthood?

As I write this article, we

are observing the 64th annual National Day of Prayer for America. Two weeks ahead of our designated day of prayer, the people in Australia declared a time of prayer and fasting on behalf of America. Australia humbled us and affirmed us and convicted us by washing the feet of our nation in prayer.

Paul was a marked man. He had a born again second birth mark. He had a follower of Jesus baptism water mark. He had a prayer warrior knee mark. He had suffering for Jesus scar marks. I believe that Paul also had acquired calloused hands and feet as he went from place to place expanding the reach of the gospel helping to establish churches in the first century. Those callouses were called service marks. Paul set a very high bar for servants by following the example of Jesus.

In Galatians 6:14, Paul declared that he would never boast unless he was bragging on Jesus. Self-assessment is our next urgent task. What is my motive? Do I seek to serve or desire to BE served? Am I looking for a mirror to see my own reflection or am I seeking to BE a reflection of Christ to others?

Being a servant is definitely glue that binds us to Jesus and to one another. Being a servant is also a sweet honey that attracts and draws attention to the Source of Life. Stick with love. Stick with encouragement. Stick with forgiveness. Stick with service. One of the gospel metaphors Paul employed was athletics. So, How's YOUR serve?

Brown is staff evangelist, First Church, Richland.



### Explore the Bible

with Kiely D. Young



### Bible Studies for Life

with Becky Brown

## Revivals & Homecomings

► **Blackwater Church, Dal-  
eville:** 175th anniversary May  
17; service, 11 a.m., followed  
by covered dish lunch; revival,  
May 18 - 20; 7 p.m. nightly.  
Gary Rivers, speaker; Heath  
Riggs, pastor.

► **Doty Springs Church,  
Ethel:** Homecoming, May 17;  
service, 10:30 a.m., followed  
by covered dish lunch; Daniel  
Fortenberry, speaker and  
pastor.

► **Double Springs Church,**

**Maben:** Revival, May 17 - 20;  
Sun., 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed.,  
7 p.m.; Brannon Armstrong,  
speaker; Julie Ford, music.

► **Airport Church, Grena-  
da:** Homecoming, May 17;  
service, 11 a.m., followed by  
covered dish lunch; Larry Liv-  
ingston, speaker; Sonia Til-  
gham, music.

► **Bellevue Church, Ponto-**

**toc County:** Homecoming,  
May 17; service, 11 a.m., fol-  
lowed by fellowship meal;  
Mike Pickens, speaker; Tom-  
my Inmon, pastor.

► **Lucien Church,  
Brookhaven:** Homecoming,  
May 17; service, 10:30 a.m., fol-  
lowed by lunch; Emory May,  
speaker; Carroll Walker, pastor.

► **Mt. Gilead Church, Meridi-**

**an:** Homecoming, May 17; Sun-  
day School, 9:45 a.m.; worship,  
10:45 a.m., followed by covered  
dish lunch; Michael Yancey,  
speaker.

► **Cedar Bluff Church, Cedar  
Bluff:** Revival, May 17 - 20;  
Sun., 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. night-  
ly; Roy Myers, speaker; Mark  
Stafford, music; Todd Chesser,  
pastor.

# Call to prayer: Help Baltimore in time of need

By Michael Crawford  
Correspondent

Many of you are now well aware of what's happened the past few weeks in Baltimore. All of our hearts are saddened and broken, and a lot of us are wondering, "What can we do to help?" I want to give you a few things that I think could be truly and really helpful.



CRAWFORD

The first thing is you could really pray. Like, really pray. Not Facebook that you're praying. Not tweet that you're praying. Not have a sentiment that you're praying. Like really pray.

Churches, why don't you gather and have a special hour of prayer? Small groups, community groups, whatever groups you call them, y'all should get together and really pray. Dedicate a few hours to prayer. Get your people to fast and pray. We believe that if we, the people of God, call on God, then He will heal our land and that's what we need. We need to lead in prayer, so I want to challenge you to do that.

The second way you can help is in not being divided. Most of us probably need to get off of Twitter and Facebook and get on our faces. Be careful of the potential divisive rhetoric.

The third way you can help is by resourcing us. As the team

strategist of the Mid-Atlantic Baptist Network at the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware, I oversee church planting there. There are a lot of church plants here in our city. There are more than 60 churches in Baltimore Association led by director of missions Bob Mackey, and we are on the ground here doing the clean-up and doing the work and meeting people.

Long after the cameras and the SWAT teams and the police are gone, the people will still be here and we need to rebuild. The church needs to drive the bus and not sit on the side and watch it pass by, so we need your prayers.

We need your resources. We will use the money you send to resource the local churches so they can do the job that Jesus has commanded them and commissioned them and given them the authority and the gifts to do.

The last thing — some of you may need to actually get on a bus or in your car or on a plane and come join a local church. Like, for good. This could be a call for some of you to move permanently to Baltimore, permanently plant your roots like many of us have done and fall in love with the city that Jesus is deeply in love with.

We believe that God is great. We believe God is doing great things. There is an opportunity, a window of a lifetime for us to step into and let our light shine. My invitation to you is to respond to that window. We got one chance to do this. Let's do this.

## Pro-life groups say they'll defy D.C. law

**WASHINGTON (BP)** — Pro-life groups are vowing to resist a new District of Columbia law they say will force their organizations to violate their beliefs and mission.

The leaders allege the Reproductive Health Non-discrimination Amendment Act (RHNDAA) seeks to force the pro-life organizations to act in contradiction to their religious beliefs and purpose by compelling them to support pro-abortion groups that oppose their teachings on the sanctity of all human life.

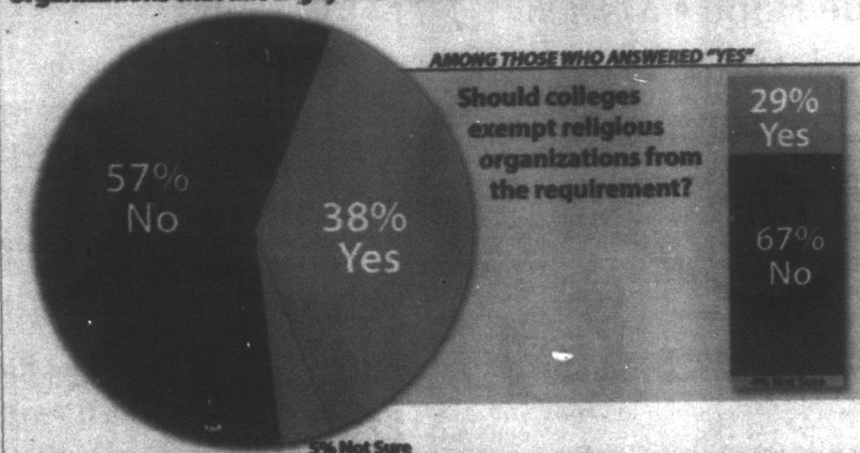
Eight organizations that have offices in America's capital issued an open statement May 4 after the U.S. Congress failed to prevent the D.C. law from going into effect. The signers include Russell Moore, president of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) of the

Southern Baptist Convention, and leaders with the Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF), Americans United for Life, the March for Life, Susan B. Anthony List, Concerned Women for America, Association of Christian Schools International, and Family Research Council.

The ERLC has offices in both Nashville and Washington, D.C. "Despite the enactment of this unjust law, we will continue to hire employees who share our commitment to the dignity of every member of the human family," Moore and the others said in the letter organized by ADF. "We will not abandon the purpose of our organizations in order to comply with this illegal and unjust law. We will vigorously resist any effort under RHNDAA to violate our constitutionally protected fundamental rights."

### AMONG AMERICANS

Should colleges only provide funding or meeting space to student organizations that allow gay and lesbian students to be in leadership roles?



## Poll: Don't punish student groups for setting standards

**NASHVILLE (BP)** — While disputes over who can lead student religious groups continue to be debated, few Americans appear to want groups punished for requiring their leaders to hold specific beliefs or practices, a LifeWay Research study shows.

A new study from the Nashville-based research group, a division of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, finds mixed opinions about whether student religious groups should be allowed to mandate leaders' beliefs or, because of their religious beliefs, restrict LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender) members from leadership roles.

Nearly seven in 10 say colleges should not withhold funding or meeting space from such organizations.

The issue has emerged in recent years on college campuses from California to Maine. Student groups say their belief statements and ethics define their identity. College officials, citing what are known as "all-comers" rules, insist groups and their leadership be open to all students no matter what.

Groups at more than two dozen campuses have lost their official standing over this disagreement. One dispute, at the Hastings College of Law in California, went before the U.S. Supreme Court. Lawmakers in several states have proposed laws that would bar colleges from applying "all-comers" rules to on-campus religious groups.

Ed Stetzer, executive director of LifeWay Research, said, "Re-

cent university restrictions on beliefs and practices of student group leadership are a sharp contrast to admissions offices that celebrate pluralism, residential programs that encourage diversity, and schools that encourage new thinking. Oddly, these 'all-comers' policies lead to the idea that even Oscar Mayer should be allowed to lead the Vegetarian Club."

LifeWay Research asked 1,000 Americans to respond to this statement in a phone survey: "Should student religious organizations, recognized by publicly funded colleges, be allowed to require their leaders to hold specific beliefs?"

Forty-eight percent say no. Forty-six percent say yes. Evangelicals (51%) are more likely to say groups can require specific beliefs than those with no religious preference (33%).

LifeWay Research asked a similar question about student groups at private colleges. Fifty-one percent of Americans say those groups should be allowed to have required beliefs. Forty-four percent say they should not.

Researchers also asked Americans whether colleges should restrict student groups that do not allow homosexual and lesbian students to be leaders. Evangelicals and Catholics often believe that sexual behavior outside of marriage, and homosexual behavior, disqualifies a person from certain leadership roles.

Thirty-eight percent say colleges should give funding and meeting space only to groups that allow homosexual and lesbian leaders. Fifty-

seven percent disagree with that restriction.

Nones, those with no religious preference, are more likely (48%) to want to see limits on groups that ban homosexual leaders than Christians (37%) or those from other faiths (25%).

Catholics (50%) are more likely to want to see limits than Protestants (32%) or evangelicals (27%).

Yet support for a restriction lessens when religious objections come into play. Those who support the restriction were asked whether colleges should "exempt religious organizations that object to homosexual behavior from this requirement." Twenty-nine percent of this subset affirmed religious organizations should be exempt.

The combined response to the two questions indicates 68% of Americans believe colleges should not withhold funding or meeting space from religious student organizations that do not allow homosexual and lesbian students to be in leadership roles.

Twenty-six percent believe colleges should withhold funding or meeting space from such organizations, while seven percent are unsure.

"Religious groups are defined by belief and practice," Stetzer said. "An increasing number of universities are not permitting student leadership in religious groups to be defined by their own beliefs and practices. More than two-thirds of Americans stop short of denying funding or meeting space on campus despite the groups' increasingly unpopular religious beliefs and practices."